



# **VIRGINIA MILITARY ADVISORY COUNCIL**

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## **SEPTEMBER 29, 2010 - JOINT BASE MYER-HENDERSON HALL**

### **Meeting Minutes**

Major General Karl Horst was elected as Chairman of the Virginia Military Advisory Council (VMAC).

Mrs. Suit presented the VMAC work plan which addressed the three current subcommittees and made a recommendation for one new subcommittee.

#### **Oceana/Fentress** –

- Established by Virginia statute; The Oceana/Fentress Council shall identify, study and provide advice and comments to the VMAC on issues of mutual concern to the Commonwealth and the Navy concerning Naval Air Station Oceana and Naval Auxiliary Landing Field Fentress and address such other issues as the Governor or the VMAC may determine to be appropriate subjects of consideration.
- Commanders were asked to consider if a similar arrangement would be helpful to their area. A suggestion was made to look at the Rivanna Station in Charlottesville area as a possibility as the growth in that area as a result of BRAC will impact the community.

#### **Quality of Life (QOL)** -

- The QOL subcommittee is a standing committee with the purpose to support force readiness ensuring quality of life issues for military members and their families are appropriately addressed by the Commonwealth.
- This Subcommittee coordinates legislative issues which need to be addressed with the General Assembly. Once VMAC approves, the Council works with the Joint Leadership Council to get issues in front of General Assembly.

- RADM Boensel has requested to step down as Chair of the QOL. The VMAC needs to identify a replacement. Ms. Suit asked if anyone was willing to accept the role as Chair to contact Mike Coleman.
- Ms. Suit acknowledged the contributions of Shannon Sullivan-Hurst who worked on the Subcommittee for a number of years.

**Homeland Security** – the VMAC approved the dissolution of this Subcommittee.

**Civil – Military Mutual Aid**

- The VMAC approved the establishment of this Subcommittee. Secretary Decker will Chair this Subcommittee.
- The purpose is to ensure a strong support between the military installations and the local communities in the event of a disaster.
- Major General Horst referenced the number of agreements that are in place in support of the National Capital Region and offer the assistance of his Provost, COL Steven Lynch, email [Steven.Lynch@jfhqncr.northcom.mil](mailto:Steven.Lynch@jfhqncr.northcom.mil), as a resource for the Subcommittee. After the meeting, the following notified Mike Coleman they would be interested to work on the Subcommittee.

RADM Don Loren (Ret.)  
COL Mike Morrow, Ft. Lee  
COL John Strycula, Fort Belvoir  
LTC Jack Haefner, Fort AP Hill

- Secretary Decker commented that Virginia has some of the strongest emergency management laws in the nation. This subcommittee needs to look at the Commonwealth from a strategic level and find ways to most appropriately include the military installations.

**Report on Commission on Military and National Security Facilities:**

- Mrs. Suit reported to the VMAC the history behind the formation of the Commission. She discussed the composition and role the Commission will play with identifying new military and national security facilities that could be located in Virginia, and how to retain those facilities we have. She discussed the most recent meetings held with senior defense officials and the hearings on Capitol Hill.
- Major General Horst asked how the VMAC can support the Commission. At this time there does not appear to be anything specific, Mrs. Suit will keep the VAMC informed and notify the Chair if there are specific requirements needed.

### Report on “Serve a Service Members Family”:

- Mike Coleman reported on this message being stressed by First Lady McDonnell to create an awareness among the citizens of the Commonwealth that there are deployed families as our neighbors and we should reach out to serve them anyway we can. The First Lady plans outreach to deployed families in a variety of ways on a regular basis. Mike asked the members of VMAC to suggest possible ways which would be beneficial to the families of the deployed.
- COL Mike Morrow, Fort Lee, described the impact a visit by the Governor and First Lady bringing dinner to two families at Fort Lee in September. Although the notice was late the families were tremendously appreciative of the visit.

### Discussion from the VMAC:

- Try to find a way to keep a confidential list of families who would be willing to participate in a visit.
- Do not forget the Wounded Warrior Program and those families.
- National Guard has a good list of deployed families consider the Family Readiness Groups as a way to reach out to the Reserves.
- Do not forget about the Individual Mobilization Augmentees when working with Reserves. These are the single individuals who do not go out with units.
- Consider inviting the First Lady to the ground breaking at Fort Belvoir for the Fisher House and USO Buildings.
- Alert the First Lady’s staff of the military evacuation to CONUS hospitals in which the Military District of Washington is involved. The flights arrive at Andrews Air Force base three times a week carrying injured soldiers who need to be further transported to other locations in the United States. Secretary Decker and Mrs. Suit would like to greet one of the aircraft.

### Report on **Child Custody**:

Julie Gifford reported the ad hoc committee to address the child custody legislation met to discuss the two issues which DoD would like Virginia to strength its laws.

- *A service member with visitation rights be allowed to petition the court to allow those visitation rights to be delegated to a third person during the service member’s absence due to military service.*
- *To allow for the service member to provide electronic testimony in court proceedings if the service member is unable to attend in person due to military service.*

Cheshire I'Anson Eveleigh, a Family Law Attorney from Virginia Beach, agreed to present the DoD position to the Virginia Bar Association Family Law Coalition to see if there are any specific objections.

#### Report on **Child Care Centers**:

Julie Gifford reported Virginia has been selected as one of the first 13 states to participate in a new program offered by the DoD to increase access to affordable quality child care for military families utilizing existing local, state and federal resources.

Benefits to the program are:

Allow for a subsidy to military families to help offset the increased cost of “off-post” child care; Encourage “off-post” child care centers to achieve the high standards as set forth in the Virginia quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) and incorporated the DoD standards into the QRIS; and Hire a full-time employee to work in the pilot states to coordinate these efforts.

#### Report on **Spouse Career**:

Julie Gifford reported the goal is to make state licensing and certification processes easier for military spouses who often relocate due to their spouse's government orders.

Current statute provides that if a service member is transferred out of the country and holds a license in Virginia for any profession the license will not expire for up to 5 years while they are out of the country. However, once the service member returns to Virginia they have 60 days to renew the license.

Need to consider if the statute could be changed to include the spouse of the service member as well.